

At present, the potency of the convalescent serum can be tested only by its clinical effect. Further attempts are being made to titre the serum.

Experience shows that the most beneficial results will be obtained by giving the proper serum within the first forty-eight hours of the pneumonia complication.

It has been our observation that the virulence of the organism has decreased in this hospital as the epidemic progressed, but, making allowance for this diminu-

tion in severity of the pneumonia cases, it is believed that the serum from convalescent influenza pneumonia patients has a decided influence in shortening the course of the disease and in lowering the mortality.

This treatment requires the coöperation of a well-equipped laboratory, where the proper laboratory procedure, as previously noted, can be performed; and should be used only by those who are prepared to have this necessary laboratory work carried out.



CENTRALIZED HEALTH AND RELIEF AGENCIES IN AN INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

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and

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THE earliest and most striking feature that came to our attention in planning our campaign for combating the pandemic of influenza, which has ravaged this state for the past month, was the absence of uniform methods of organization in the various health agencies upon whom we were obliged to rely. It was perfectly apparent that everyone was anxious to help, each willing to work unceasingly till the appointed task had been accomplished, but there was likewise evidence that each wanted to go along in their own accustomed groove, not realizing that at such a time unification of effort and direction could only be obtained by the loss of their personal identity.

A short time sufficed to prove to us that unless we were to be buried under a multiplicity of agencies, and to court disaster, we must coördinate these forces under one administrative head to work for the common good of all. As calls for assistance coming to this department became more

urgent, organizers were sent out by Miss Bernice W. Billings, who had immediate charge of the nursing forces, to investigate conditions in each city or town, ascertaining if possible if all local health agencies were giving maximum service to the locality in which they were situated.

In many instances, it was clearly shown that if these local bodies would consent to centralization and coördination, they would be fully able to handle their own problem.

The law directs specifically that each local board of health shall make such regulations as it deems necessary for the control of communicable diseases within its limits, and here, already established, was a logical administrative head under which all activities for checking this outbreak were to be placed.

After several organizing visits had been made to various places, it was deemed advisable to formulate a plan for distribution to local boards of health, and to other

agencies, who were helping in the actual combating of this outbreak, or where it was evident that they would be called upon within a very short time to organize for their own protection.

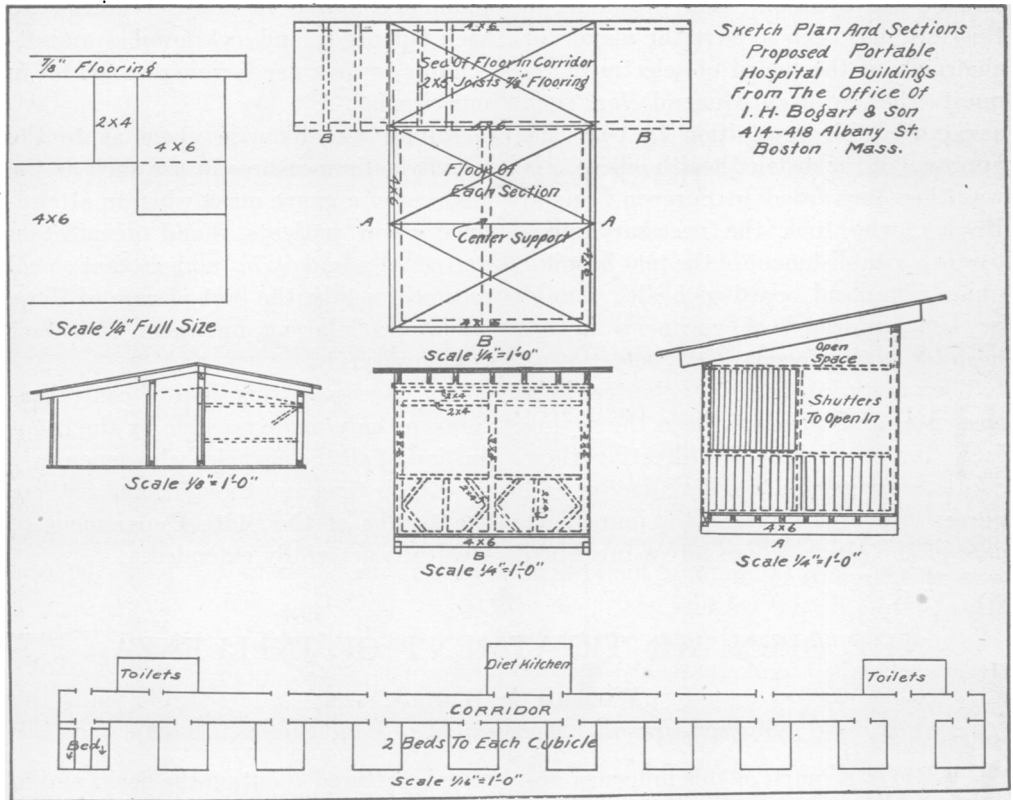
The work of formulating this plan was allotted to Miss Amy Wood, general secretary for the League for Preventive Work, who early volunteered to assist in our work.

gency hospitals on call of doctor, and provide for ambulance service.

(c) To have assignment of cases ready promptly for visiting nurses and aids to start out at 8.30 a. m. and 1 p. m.

(d) To arrange for proper and continuous nourishment for patient, or for families, reported by doctors, or nurses, as in need.

(e) To receive reports from nurses.



A brief summary of her plan is as follows:

Work must be centralized in permanent, or temporary, office of the boards of health.

This office to be kept open at all times
with responsible person in attendance
whose duty it shall be

(a) To receive all general calls for medical service, and to assign to doctors.

(b) To arrange for admission to emer-

(f) To receive daily reports from doctors of number of new cases, and deaths.

(g) To arrange for the proper care of the dead within twelve hours.

All doctors should be requested to refer to this central office all calls which they receive but cannot attend to within a reasonable time, and to accept cases, from this office, if they can attend to them. If the calls become too numerous for local doctors to handle, the local board of

health may call on the State Department of Health for assistance.

All nursing assistance should be under the direction of the central body.

The establishment of the emergency hospital is of special importance because with the grouping of patients it has been found feasible to obtain maximum efficiency with a minimum outlay of graduate nurses, utilizing lay workers working under their direction. The procedure in this state has been to have the mayor, or chairman of the board of selectmen, request the Adjutant-General for such assistance, this requisition to bear the approval of the district health officer. It was then forwarded to Surgeon-General Brooks, who took the necessary steps towards establishment of the tent hospital unit. The local board of health should be kept informed of vacancies in this hospital as they occur.

The assistance given by volunteer help has, in a large measure, been the saving factor in our fight. By directing their efforts, we were able to relieve doctors and nurses of everything save the immediate care of the sick. These forces furnished

automobile service, arranged for supplies of foods, and, in fact, took care of detail which, if left to the ordinary channels, would have been a source of great difficulty.

Information dealing with prevention was prepared laying particular stress upon unnecessary fear which could be allayed by human contact and statement of actual facts. The distribution of the pamphlet, house to house visitation to seek out needy and sick families and attending to their needs were planned for in our circular.

Advice was likewise given as to the prophylactic measures in use such as the wearing of a gauze mask when in attendance upon patients, hand disinfection and the admonition added that local authorities take the best of care of those who were laboring for them and their community.

The success of this plan of centralization was only made possible by the coöperation of all the agencies who generously gave their time and thought, and to these the thanks of the State Department of Health is gratefully extended.

THE OPEN AIR TREATMENT OF INFLUENZA.

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Surgeon-General, Massachusetts State Guard.

BEFORE much of this influenza appeared in Boston there were rumors of it, and then one or two cases appeared. Doctor Croke, who had charge of the ships connected with the Recruiting Service of the Shipping Board at East Boston, was instructed that if a case was found all the attendants were to be masked with gauze masks.

One Monday morning Doctor Croke reported that he was getting a great many cases of influenza. A visit was made to the ships in East Boston, where men were

found scattered about on the decks and in their bunks. Apparently there were too many cases for the hospitals in Boston to accommodate in a hurry.

Mr. Henry Howard, director of the Recruiting Service, was seen and a plan was suggested to him to establish a tent hospital on Corey Hill with the assistance of the State Guard. Colonel Stevens, the adjutant-general of the Massachusetts State Guard, consented to call out the State Guard at the expense of the Shipping Board. Colonel Emery, at half-